

**TERM OF REFERENCE OF THE
THE NETWORK OF HEADS OF ICT OF THE EUROPEAN AGENCIES (ICTAC)**

1 Mission Statement

The mission of ICTAC is to promote inter-Agency co-operation on issues of common interest in the area of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

2 Objectives

This co-operation is aimed to maximize the Agencies investment in ICT services through knowledge and experience sharing and exchange of good practices. In this context, ICTAC members collaborate to find viable and economical solutions to common ICT related problems, to exchange know-how and to adopt common positions where appropriate. ICTAC operates under the guidance of the Network of Heads of Agencies.

The network will in particular:

- a. provide a forum for the exchange of best practices within the network,
- b. provide a mechanism to formulate common positions on ICT matters and communicate those to the EU Agencies Network,
- c. establish and maintain a communication channel with DIGIT (Directorate General for Informatics) in order to ensure that decentralised Agencies needs are also considered by DIGIT,
- d. foster collaboration between Agencies by sharing costs, resources and best practices when developing, maintaining or implementing new ICT systems or undertaking other ICT activities,
- e. support the EU Agencies Network on ICT matters, provide expert advice when requested or on a proactive manner,
- f. Represent the Agencies in the CII (Comité interinstitutionnel de l'informatique) which is a committee of all EU Institutions.

2.1 Rational and Foundations of ICTAC

The underpinning rationale and legal basis for such cooperation are derived from:

- a. standard Community practice and policy recognizing that sharing knowledge and “best practice” are vehicles of progress and innovation and furthermore allow for the optimisation of human and capital resources.
- b. EU Governance, i.e. the principles such as: openness, participation, accountability effectiveness, coherence. (European Governance a White Paper, - 2002)
- c. the EP's resolutions for greater inter-institutional synergy and transparency and the EP's recommendations for minimum common principles and rules concerning the structure, operation and control of all the regulatory agencies (REPORT on a strategy for the future settlement of the institutional aspects of Regulatory Agencies, (2008/2103(INI)).

- d. the fact that ICT represents one of greatest areas of commonality across the EU Agencies i.e. the most horizontal issue in all agencies, the most transversal service need of Agencies' administrations.
- e. the fact that ICT cooperation is a key driver for effectiveness, coherence and convergence of ICT environments (in terms of technology and resources) and is instrumental for aligning the technology to the Agencies' general business strategies.
- f. the fact that ICT related problems resulting from Agencies' decentralisation e.g.: cost of ownership, economy of scale, interoperability, re-invention versus re-use, localisation versus common needs etc., call for a concerted approach.

3 Members

Members comprise the Heads of ICT of EU agencies, executive agencies, and other bodies (EUI, EESC, CoR) as well as joint undertakings. Altogether, some 40+ entities participate in ICTAC.

ICTAC was formally established in June 2003 in Thessaloniki.

Representatives from DIGIT (Directorate General for Informatics) and other bodies of the community such as the Court of Auditors, Internal Audit Services may attend ICTAC meetings. ICTAC is also represented at the CII (Comité interinstitutionnel de l'informatique).

Decisions on the inclusion of new members are taken by consensus based on a proposal by the Chair.

4 Chairmanship and Coordination

- a. A member of the ICTAC serves as Chairperson by chairing the meetings and co-ordinating activities between meetings.
- b. The Chairperson is elected by and among the members of the ICTAC by simple majority.
- c. The election of the Chairperson takes place during an annual meeting and each member has one vote.
- d. From March 2015 onwards, the Chairperson is from the same Agency as the one chairing the EU Agencies Network, provided that the said member has a Head of ICT or equivalent, and sufficient resources to ensure the Chairmanship of the ICTAC.
- e. If for logistical reasons the Chair's agency cannot host all the sub-network meetings, then that meeting is co-chaired by the hosting Agency and the Agency that chairs the sub-network. This approach ensures continuity and better communication is established with the EU Agencies Network.
- f. The Chairperson is elected for one year, from 1 March of year N to 28 February of year N + 1.
- g. The Chairperson is head of a "Troika" consisting of the previous Chairperson and the next Chairperson. The Troika supports the Chairperson on all matters concerning his/her role, including his/her substitution, if circumstances so require. The Chairperson closely involves and consults the "Troika" on all aspects of the coordination work. The responsibility for the continuity of the work rests with the Chairperson who also informs the EU Agencies Network of the proceedings of the ICTAC sub-network.

5 Reporting

- a. The ICTAC sub-network operates under the provisions of the present Terms of Reference.
- b. ICTAC will submit for approval to the EU Agencies Network each year in November (year n): presentation of draft work program for the coming year (year n+1). It is expected to have

the work program approved by the EU Agencies Network in February and hence allowing the ICTAC to proceed with the implementation of the agreed tasks.

- c. Each year in February the ICTAC will present to the EU Agencies Network its annual report for year n-1

6 Meetings

The following provisions shall apply:

- a. The ICTAC meets two times per year based on the agreed tasks in its annual work program. One of the reasons to have two meetings is to address the fast changing environment of the ICT industry.
- b. Representatives with delegated authority may attend meetings on behalf of a member in case the member is prevented from attending a meeting. They may be accompanied by another staff, if necessary. However, for reasons of operability, the Chairperson may limit the number of participants. To this end, each Agency shall notify prior to the meeting its intended participation.
- c. In consultation with the “Troika” and the ICTAC members, the Chairperson may invite external participants to a meeting.
- d. A draft agenda shall be drawn up by the Chairperson in consultation with the “Troika” and forwarded to the network at least 1 month before the next meeting. The relevant material for agenda points subject to decision making shall be forwarded at least seven days prior to each meeting.
- e. A quorum necessary for the meeting to be valid shall be achieved when at least half of the members or their representatives are present. Also for a decision to be adopted, if consensus is not possible, the position shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority of present members and dissenting opinions shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

7 Minutes of meetings

- a. Minutes of each meeting shall include a summary record of the proceedings, the positions adopted and decision taken. The draft minutes shall be circulated to the members shortly after the meeting for comments. At least ten days prior to the following meeting, they shall be submitted to the members for formal adoption at that meeting.
- b. The minutes will be circulated to the Heads of Agencies Troika by the Chairperson no later than **six weeks** after the meeting was held or a conclusion or recommendation is reached.

8 Working methods

ICTAC members work on a set of targeted cooperation objectives and principles. These help ensure that investments in ICT serve the needs of the Agencies, take into account strategic business objectives, and provide a sound and flexible base for future developments. In order to achieve this, ICTAC has adopted a number of working methods.

- a. **Bi-annual meetings:** During each meeting ICTAC has an agreed Agenda and includes presentations, discussions, conclusions and recommendations. Minutes are circulated with a focus on the agreed follow-up actions. The value of this is considered higher than the value ICTAC members would derive from attending external individual, expensive ICT conferences. Group meetings like this also reduce the need for bilateral agency-agency missions.

- b. **Working groups:** During each meeting time is usually devoted to workshops where attendees can focus on specific issues related to the interest of their Agency.
- c. **ICTAC representation at CII:** A nominated representative of ICTAC attends the EU Institutions Informatics Committee (CII) meetings to stay abreast of recent developments in EU informatics. ICTAC takes an active part in the Commission's ICT procurements lead by DIGIT. This helps to avoid duplication of effort and streamlines reporting back to each Agency. It has also given Agencies a higher profile both within the EU Institutions and with ICT service suppliers (e.g. TestaNG, other ICT supplies contracts).
- d. **Close collaboration with DIGIT and Commission services:** ICTAC established a permanent communication channel with DIGIT and a DIGIT representative participates to all ICTAC meetings. The same form of cooperation applies for other Commission services, where ICT input is needed. This is done in cooperation with other sub-networks and information is passed to the Chair of the EU Agencies.
- e. **Virtual meetings via Video Conferencing:** ICTAC actively promotes the use of technology advances a demonstrated by the active use of Video Conferencing to allow ICTAC members to attend meeting on a virtual basis. This has helped reduce the overall costs associated with physical meetings in bi-lateral cooperation's.
- f. **Email:** ICTAC members communicate on a regular basis via Email. To facilitate this co-operation, an ICTAC distribution list for ICTAC members has been created. This is centrally managed on a voluntary basis by the ICTAC representative at CEPOL.
- g. **Yammer:** ICTAC manage a YAMMER Group (hosted by the Commission). This provides a web based collaboration environment and is used by ICTAC to maintain its reference documents and contacts, establish chat and exchange information in a fast and efficient manner.

Using the above instruments, ICTAC representatives cooperate through knowledge sharing, participation in joint projects and sharing of experience and best practice. ICTAC members benefit from this co-operation. Return on the actual investment is significant, especially for new or small agencies but also for the established and larger agencies where change is needed to follow the constant ICT evolution and regulatory updates.

9 Costs

ICTAC does not have a budget. The bi-annual meetings are hosted by the Agency holding the Chair at that time. The expenses incurred by the Agency organising the meeting as well as the travel expenses of the participants is kept to a minimum. Actual travel expenses for participation in an ICTAC meeting is covered, by each Agency concerned, as mission costs.

END OF DOCUMENT